Remarks

The Office Action mailed April 21, 2005 has been reviewed and the following remarks have been made in consequence thereof.

Claims 1-46 are now pending in this application. Claims 1-46 are rejected. Claims 1, 12-16, 19, 20, 23-25, 28, 29, and 32 have been amended. No new matter has been added.

The rejection of Claims 1-46 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Cravo de Almeida et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0169871), referred to as Cravo, is respectfully traversed.

Cravo describes a remote monitoring system including a local server (12). The local server executes an agent (24), which collects data that indicates an operating state of the local server, including configuration information and performance data (paragraph 27). The data provides a measure of how well the local server is performing its intended functions (paragraph 27). The agent automatically transmits the collected data using email, which conforms to a standard email protocol, to an email address associated with a monitor server (20) (paragraph 27). A timer module (48) within the local server can be configured in a selected one of possible data collection modes (paragraph 33). Each configuration mode is associated with a sampling period (204a, 204b) after which a data retriever (46) within the local server collects a new sample of the data from the local server (paragraph 33).

Claim 1 recites an e-mail-enabled automation control module (ACM) comprising "an ACM; and an e-mail system electrically connected to said ACM configured to automate control of at least one device, said e-mail system configured to perform at least one of sending e-mail messages from said ACM through a network, and receiving e-mail messages from the network."

Cravo does not describe or suggest an e-mail-enabled automation control module as recited in Claim 1. Specifically, Cravo does not describe or suggest an e-mail system electrically connected to the ACM configured to automate control of at least one device, the e-mail system configured to perform at least one of sending e-mail messages from said ACM through a network. Rather, Cravo describes an email

system, which conforms to a standard email protocol, for sending data from a local server to a monitor server. A description of the local server in Cravo does not describe or suggest the ACM configured to automate control of at least one device as recited in Claim 1. Accordingly, Cravo does not describe or suggest an e-mail system electrically connected to the ACM that is configured to automate control of at least one device. For the reasons set forth above, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over Cravo.

Claims 2-11 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 2-11 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that Claims 2-11 likewise are patentable over Cravo.

Claim 12 recites a method for management and control of a first automation control module (ACM), the first ACM including an e-mail system electrically connected to the first ACM and a network, the method comprising "sending e-mail messages from the first ACM through the network using the e-mail system; receiving e-mail messages from the network using the e-mail system; and requesting, by the first ACM, information via the e-mail system from a second ACM."

Cravo does not describe or suggest a method for management and control of a first automation control module as recited in Claim 12. Specifically, Cravo does not describe or suggest requesting, by the first ACM, information via the e-mail system from a second ACM. Rather, Cravo describes automatically transmitting, by an agent within a local server, collected data by using email. Cravo further describes providing a sampling period, by a timer module within the local server, after which a data retriever within the local server collects a new sample of data from the local server. A description of automatically transmitting and sampling in Cravo does not describe or suggest requesting as recited in Claim 12. Accordingly, Cravo does not describe or suggest requesting as recited in Claim 12. For the reasons set forth above, Claim 12 is submitted to be patentable over Cravo.

Claims 13-22 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 12. When the recitations of Claims 13-22 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 12, Applicants submit that Claims 13-22 likewise are patentable over Cravo.

Claim 23 recites a method for management and control of an automation control module (ACM) using an ACM system, the ACM system including a first ACM, a network, a general purpose computer electrically connected to the network, and an e-mail subsystem electrically connected to the first ACM and the network, the method comprising "sending e-mail messages from the first ACM through the network to the general purpose computer using the e-mail subsystem; receiving e-mail messages from the general purpose computer through the network using the e-mail subsystem; and requesting, by the first ACM configured to automatically control at least one device, information via the e-mail subsystem from a second ACM."

Cravo does not describe or suggest a method for management and control of an automation control module as recited in Claim 23. Specifically, Cravo does not describe or suggest requesting, by the first ACM configured to automatically control at least one device, information via the e-mail subsystem from a second ACM. Rather, Cravo describes an email system, which conforms to a standard email protocol, for sending data from a local server to a monitor server. Cravo also describes automatically transmitting, by an agent within the local server, collected data by using email. Cravo further describes providing a sampling period, by a timer module within the local server, after which a data retriever within the local server collects a new sample of data from the local server. A description of the local server in Cravo does not describe or suggest the first ACM configured to automatically control at least one device as recited in Claim 23. A description of automatically transmitting and sampling in Cravo does not describe or suggest requesting as recited in Claim 23. Accordingly, Cravo does not describe or suggest requesting as recited in Claim 23. For the reasons set forth above, Claim 23 is submitted to be patentable over Cravo.

Claims 24-31 depend from independent Claim 23. When the recitations of Claims 24-31 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 23, Applicants submit that Claims 24-31 likewise are patentable over Cravo.

Claim 32 recites an automation control module (ACM) system comprising "an ACM; a network; a general purpose computer electrically connected to said network; and an e-mail subsystem electrically connected to said network and said ACM configured to automate control of at least one device, said e-mail subsystem

configured to perform at least one of send e-mail messages from said ACM through said network to said general purpose computer and receive e-mail messages from said general purpose computer through said network."
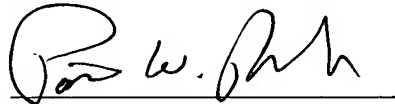
Cravo does not describe or suggest an automation control module (ACM) system as recited in Claim 32. Specifically, Cravo does not describe or suggest an e-mail subsystem electrically connected to the network and the ACM configured to automate control of at least one device, the e-mail subsystem configured to perform at least one of send e-mail messages from the ACM through the network to the general purpose computer. Rather, Cravo describes an email system, which conforms to a standard email protocol, for sending data from a local server to a monitor server. A description of the local server in Cravo does not describe or suggest the ACM configured to automate control of at least one device as recited in Claim 32. Accordingly, Cravo does not describe or suggest an e-mail subsystem electrically connected to the network and the ACM configured to automate control of at least one device. For the reasons set forth above, Claim 32 is submitted to be patentable over Cravo.

Claims 33-46 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 32. When the recitations of Claims 33-46 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 32, Applicants submit that Claims 33-46 likewise are patentable over Cravo.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 102 rejection of Claims 1-46 be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, all the claims now active in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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